reducing the number of cases as well as number of deaths due to Malaria.

Female foeticide

1499. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any fresh steps have been taken by Government recently to check the reported rampant female foeticide being practised, especially through the mushrooming unregistered clinics and labs in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the practical difficulties being faced by the States in this regard and strategies worked out to overcome them through Government guidelines and/or social awareness programmes, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) With a view to contain the menace of female foeticide, Government has enacted and brought into force the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misues) Act, 1994 (PNDT Act) with effect from 1.1.1996. The implementation of the provisions of the Act rests with the States/UTs. The Supreme Court of India has also issued directions to both Central and State Governments for implementation of the Act.

The Central Government have requested all the State Governments/UTs to implement the provisions of the Act and comply with the directions of the the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India with full vigor and zeal. Appropriate Authorities and Advisory Committees have been appointed under the Act in all the States/ UTs. These have been appointed at district and at some places at sub-district levels in most of the States/UTs. They are taking action to generate awareness about the provisions of the Act in public and among law enforcing agencies, service providers, medical and para-medical personnel by hoardings, wall paintings, news papers, All India Radio, TV and other means of publicity. The Central

Government has constituted a Central Supervisory Board under the chairmanship of Minister for Health and Family Welfare. Quarterly returns about the implementation of the Act and compliance with the directions of the Supreme Court of India are obtained from State Governments/UTs by the Central Supervisory Board (CSB).

A list of over 11,000 buyers of ultrasound machines received from the manufacturers, importers, suppliers, dealers, service providers etc. of such machines has been forwarded to the States/UTs for ensuring registration of the persons/bodies using them including sealing and seizure of the machines of unregistered clinics. They have so far filed 103 complaints against the violators of the provisions of the Act and have sealed/seized machines of 22 clinics.

(c) A meeting of the Appropriate Authorities appointed in States/UTs including the Appropriate Authorities appointed at district and sub-district levels was held on 30th June, 2001 to review and monitor the implementation of the Act at grass-root level. They were sensitized about their role in implementation of the provisions of the Act. More such meetings are proposed to be held in various parts of the country. Workshops/seminars are being organized for generating awareness about the provisions of the Act, among service providers, law enforcing agencies, medical and para-medical people and public at large at State/regional/district/block level. Voluntary Organisations are also being involved to carry out projects for creating awareness about the provisions of the Act as well as for conducting research studies to address the root cause thereof.

Leprosy in Gujarat

1500. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether leprosy is prevalent in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the number of lepers in the State as on 31st December, 2001, district-wise;

(c) whether all of them have been covered under National Leprosy Eradication Programme; and